

REASONS, &c.



R E A S O N S
WHY THE
PEOPLE CALLED *QUAKERS*
Cannot so fully unite with the
M E T H O D I S T S,
IN THEIR
*MISSIONS TO THE NEGROES IN THE WEST
INDIA ISLANDS AND AFRICA,*
AS FREELY TO CONTRIBUTE THERETO;
WITH A FEW
Queries consonant therewith.

I COR. XIV. 20.

Brethren, be not children in understanding : howbeit, in
malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

BY CATHARINE PHILLIPS.

SECOND EDITION.

London :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY JAMES PHILLIPS,
GEORGE-YARD, LOMBARD-STREET.

1793.



REASONS, &c.

AS some religious persons may misconceive the reasons which prevent Friends from freely contributing (when called upon) to the expences of the Methodists missions, to the West India Islands and Africa, to instruct the Negroes in Christianity ; I have been induced to point out so many of them for their information, as may, I hope, convince impartial minds, that they are not therein actuated by a spirit of bigotry ; but, on the contrary, of religious caution, lest they should any way contribute to (a) build again those things which the Spirit of Truth has destroyed in their religious society.

There remains no doubt, that many of the preachers among the Methodists have been instrumental to rouse sinful men from their beds of ease, and convince them of the danger of their state, and of the impossibility of their attaining salvation, even through the mediation of Christ, unless they are renewed up in him, through the purifying operation of his Holy Spirit, in righteousness and inward holiness.

(a) Gal. ii. 18.

So far as this awakening work has advanced, and its consequent fruits of renovation of mind and manners have been produced, the truly religious amongst Friends have rejoiced therein; and have united in spirit with their conscientious labours, so far as they have ministered in the ability which flows from Christ, the Holy Head of his own Church; as well as with the really reformed members of the Society, who act agreeably to the light wherewith they have been favoured, and are concerned to attain a perfect knowledge of their duty, and experience of salvation.

For *these*, Friends desire that they may witness an entire and steady settlement under the government of God's pure Spirit, which is the alone infallible teacher and leader, appointed of Christ to be so unto the end of time. To him all instrumental ministers should direct those minds they have been assisted to awaken, that they may know him to (a) "guide them into all truth;" consonant with the promise of Christ, who, by this his own pure Spirit, is with his disciples and followers in their respective stations and services, (b) "always even unto the end of the world;" bringing all his edifying sayings to their remembrance, as their spiritual states require them, either for reproof, instruction, or consolation; and opening their understandings into his holy doctrines, and the glorious mystery of redemption through him, from unrighte-

(a) John xvi. 13.

(b) Matt. xxviii. 20.

ousness, that they may become purified unto God, (a)
 “ a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

But, whereas it appears to Friends, that some of the principal leaders among the Methodists, endeavour to fix the people in the observance of forms and of inefficacious ceremonies, which, in the apostatized state of the Christian Church, were stiled religious ; they cannot therein unite with them. For out of all these did the divine Spirit of Truth, lead their zealous and pious predecessors, in their beginning as a people ; and it does still convince the truly enlightened among them, that, instead of establishing the mind in the holy fear of God, and in a steady dependance upon him, they tend to deprive him, in part, of the honour of his own glorious work in the soul, by leading to a degree of reliance upon the (b) “ weak and beggarly elements” for assistance to perfect them in righteousness, and on (c) “ the creature more than the Creator, who is God, blessed for ever : Amen,” say the souls who humbly wait upon him, and witness his Son revealed in them by his Spirit, to be their King, Priest, and Prophet ; their (d) “ Alpha and Omega ;” the beginner and ender of his own glorious work of sanctification ; by whom they are washed with the (e) “ washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ;” and their souls are fed with the bread of life, and refreshed with the new wine of his heavenly kingdom.

(a) Titus ii. 14.

(b) Gal. iv. 9.

(c) Rom. i. 25.

(d) Rev. i. 11.

(e) Titus iii. 5.

These, seeing that the end is come upon the shadowy dispensations of the Mosaic Law, and of John the Baptist, can no longer touch nor taste with them; knowing that when their appointed use in their season was fulfilled, they were to cease, and that Christ's spiritual dispensation of (a) Light, Grace, and Truth, must stand alone and be exalted upon the top of all mountains of high profession. This is confirmed by the answer given to those peculiarly favoured disciples, who, seeing Christ's transfiguration upon the mount, and (b) "Moses and Elias talking with him," were overcome with the glory they had beheld; and Peter requested of him allowance to "build three tabernacles, one for him, one for Moses, and one for Elias," (c) who is John the Baptist, not knowing what he said; he not having seen to the end of all that was to be abolished. But the instruction from God, was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." Thus, the Father condescended, immediately, to testify to his own last and most glorious dispensation of grace and truth, through his Son to mankind, appointing him their infallible and free teacher; not then leaving it to himself to testify to his own office, although (d) "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Under a sense of the awfulness of this merciful manifestation of the will of the Father, my mind is humbled; and desires are raised, that the Son, through his

(a) John i. (b) Matt. xvii. 3, 4, & 5. and 10 to 13 ver.
 (c) Matt. xi. 14. (d) Col. ii. 9.

own pure Spirit of light and life, may instruct and invigorate awakened minds, to the perfecting of them in true holiness of faith and practice.

When men set bounds to this holy Spirit of wisdom, and endeavour to fix the people in the observance of what themselves acknowledge to be non-essentials, Friends cannot unite with them herein; because in Christ's Church nothing can remain, by his appointment, which is inefficacious.

All that is of human appointment, or which is retained of the former dispensations, must be come out of: and let human reasoning support, as it may for a time, the useless ceremonies which remain in the nominal Christian Church; yet the true light will discover them to be but the chaff, from which Christ will purge *his own* spiritual Church. Therefore, religious minds should beware how they hold fast or support that which he hath appointed to be denied, as being, under his pure spiritual dispensation, unclean *unto them*, and not to be touched.

Friends have been instructed, that Christ as the holy, living, wise *head of his Church*, hath the sole power and right to purify, qualify, call, send forth, direct, and assist his ministers, who, by the immediate operation of his Spirit upon their spirits, are made in their respective measures (a) "able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter which killeth,

(a) 2 Cor. iii. 6.

but of the Spirit which giveth life." These, if obedient to him, are sent where he pleaseth, speak at his command, and keep silence when he seeth meet to appoint silence; even in the solemn assemblies, and seasons set apart for worship; wherein the attention of both ministers and hearers should be abstracted from man, and fixed upon that pure spiritual teacher, whose constant language in the soul is, **WORSHIP GOD**: and, in holy silence, living acceptable worship is performed unto him; although at other seasons, the master of these solemn assemblies appoint his ministers, whether they are (a) "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers," to speak in his name, and, agreeably to their respective gifts, (b) "minister in the ability which he giveth;" and engage them verbally to supplicate and praise God, the fountain of all good. And as in Christ Jesus (c) "there is neither male nor female," and (d) "his Spirit was poured forth upon both sexes," to qualify for these services; so, among Friends, liberty is given to women to speak (e) "as the Spirit giveth utterance;" many of whom have spoke or prophesied, (f) "to the edification and comfort of their brethren."

Now as Friends have believed in, and experienced, this pure spiritual ministry and worship, and have been commanded to testify against its contrary; and for obedience to God therein have * suffered much;

(a) Eph. iv. 11. (b) 1 Peter iv. 11. (c) Gal. iii. 28.
 (d) Acts ii. 17 & 18. (e) Acts ii. 4. (f) 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

* See *Sufferings of Friends*, in two volumes, by J. Besse, and their *History* by W. Sewel.

they

they cannot unite with the human appointments in the Methodist Society, whereby their ministers are directed how and when to preach and pray, where to go, and among what people to labour; any more than with the human wisdom, which seeks qualifications to minister from human learning and ordination from men. They acknowledge that human learning may be made useful under Divine direction; but they know that he who chose and qualified poor illiterate fishermen, &c. to preach his gospel (a) “in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power,” *is able to do so still*. And if he call these who have not school learning into his service, 'tis not for them to seek thereby to be perfected therein.

They have believed, that ministers should not, in any degree, be excited to engage in the ministry by a view to worldly interest or honour, and that Christ's command to *his* ministers is yet in force, (b) “Freely ye have received, freely give;” therefore, they appoint no maintenance for their ministers; nor contribute thereto otherwise than when they are engaged in gospel labours, to afford them such necessary accommodation, as they may be free to accept; or, if they are poor, and cannot provide for themselves and families, minister to their wants, as they maintain their other poor. Many ministers among them, labour with their hands to provide for their necessities; and others, accounting it more honourable to give than to receive, (as did the primitive gospel ministers)

(a) 1 Cor. ii. 4.

(b) Mat. x. 8.

do give liberally to their poor brethren in their various stations, and to other charitable purposes, as well as expend much in the course of their labours, in the exercise of their ministry.

From the foregoing premises it must appear that Friends cannot, consistently with their own principles, freely unite with the leaders of the Methodist Society, who establish all the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, and the maintenance of its ministers by tythes; the payment whereof, the truly conscientious among Friends cannot submit to: because those being a part of the Levitical law, are ended in Christ; as is the observance of all the ceremonies of that dispensation, which were but a (a) "type (or figure) of these good (being purely spiritual) things which were to come," and have been revealed and experienced under Christ's dispensation of light and life.

They lament, that the reformation from the apostatized Romish Church, which has made some progress in this nation, did not go forward to the full accomplishment thereof; although many laid down their lives to effect it, so far as they had seen, and are, doubtless, numbered with the glorified spirits perfected through sufferings. Some of these faithful martyrs testified against things which yet remain in the Church of England, and which its ministers seek to uphold; but which must be destroyed when Christ by his pure Spirit presides, and the (b) "chaff is burnt up by

(a) Heb. x. 1.

(b) Matt. iii. 12.

the unquenchable fire” of his divine love and power : which will effectually separate betwixt the precious and the vile, betwixt what pleaseth and serveth God, and what doth not, although it may be practised under a religious shew.

And now, having, in a mind clothed with charity towards all truly religious persons, whose understandings may not be so fully opened as to see to the end of all which should be abolished in the nominal Christian Church, penned the foregoing reasons ; I proceed to state a few Queries consonant therewith, and tending to discover whether some observances, approved and practised by some of the missionaries sent among the poor negroes, may not tend to fix their dependance upon what cannot profit them, and may confuse their weak judgments ; rather than establish them in the pure spiritual faith in Christ, and in the exercise of a worship consistent therewith.

And *First*. Supposing these poor ignorant people, through preaching the doctrines of sacred scripture, have been taught that 'tis absolutely necessary to their salvation that they should experience a change of nature ; for whereas man is a fallen creature, and, as such, is by nature of the (a) “ earth, earthy,” and hath desires and inclinations agreeable to his depraved earthly state, and hath brought forth the condemnable fruits of the flesh ; he must be heavenly minded, experiencing his desires and inclinations to be after

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 47.

bringing

bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, and knowing his spirit clothed with true holiness ; and that this necessary work of renovation can only be effected by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose coming and suffering to save them from sin, they have been intreated to believe. Now, if through the mercy of God, a degree of living faith has been raised in the power of Christ, as the head of, and alone sanctifier and perfecter of the members of his body or Church ; can it avail any thing to sprinkle a little water in their faces, and cross their foreheads with the finger, using the customary words in the performance of that ceremony, and thanking God for their * regeneration, &c? If the negroes reflect, what can they think of being thus admitted into the communion of the Church? If it be said, that, submitting to water baptism is a public acknowledgment of their faith in Christ ; I answer, First, That sprinkling is not water baptism, but an innovated ceremony substituted for it, introduced in a dark night of apostacy from the spirituality of genuine Christianity : And Secondly, No proof can be deduced from scripture, that Christ ever appointed water baptism in his Church ; although, to fulfil in his own person all the dispensations appointed of his Father, he submitted to it, as he did to all the Mosaic rites, &c. and until he had done so, and had offered up himself, as the one efficacious sacrifice appointed of his Father for the sin of the whole world, agreeable to his own testimony, (a) “not one jot nor one tittle was to pass from the law.”

* See Baptism — Church of England Service.

(a) Matt. v. 18.

We read, that (a) " his disciples baptised with water, but that he did not ;" and the foregoing quotation is a sufficient reason for his allowing them to do it, *all* not being then fulfilled. But it appears to me, that his significant, and to *men* eternally interesting, words upon the cross, (b) " It is finished," not only respected his own sufferings, but also the full accomplishment of the end of his coming and death ; which, in part, was to finish that weak shadowy dispensation, (c) " which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation ;" and to introduce another, which being pure, spiritual, and powerful, is experimentally known (d) " to be righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And at his death the use of the shadows of it ceased, although* to this day, so many professing Christianity, practise them under a different form and pretence ; and 'tis to be feared, not a *few* rest so satisfied in them, as never to attain the substance, even the experimental knowledge of (e) " Christ revealed in them the hope of glory."

The ministry of water by John the Baptist was a
 * Jewish rite, although, doubtless in Divine Wisdom, particularly appointed to be publicly used by John, (accompanied with a solemn call to repentance) to point out the cleansing baptism of Christ ; unto whom,

(a) John iv. 1 & 2.

(b) John xix. 30.

(c) Heb. ix. 10.

(d) Rom. xiv. 17.

(e) Col. i. 27.

* The Jews practised immersion in water, when they received a convert into their communion, and on many other occasions.

and

and his superior baptism by the Holy Spirit, John testified ; and directed the people unto him, (a) “ the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world :” in whom, if the negroes have believed, what edification or benefit can they acquire from this ceremony ? But it being recommended, perhaps by the ministers through whom they have believed, may they not in their weak state suppose, that it is somehow conducive to their eternal welfare, though they know not how ? and being then acknowledged Christians, may conclude themselves safe, and be the more liable to centre in a state of ease. And further, What can they think of this ceremony being performed as a necessary rite upon infants, who are incapable of believing, and have committed no sin ? If they are told that infants are included in the fall, must they believe that by this ceremony they are raised out of it, and are then and thereby really regenerated ? Did not Christ die for infants as well as for adults ? and has he left the completion of the work of their salvation (if they die in an infant state) to the option, and in the power, of men, who may perform it or not at their pleasure ; and made it possible that this work may be accomplished by a bad man as well as by a good one ? Is not this robbing Christ of his honour ? Away with such mockeries from the nominal Christian Church ! and be it acknowledged, universally acknowledged, that the way to heaven is as clear to infants from the cradle as from the (*) font, and

(a) John i. 29.

* Sweet infants from the font who fly
Unfettered to the joys on high.

Brackenbury's Sacred Poems.

and before what is called private baptism is performed upon them, as it is afterwards.

Throughout the New Testament we do not find any precept or example for infant baptism. But, alas ! the poor negroes must be taught, that it is necessary for their children to be sprinkled, (baptised they are not) for, dying without it, their souls are not safe. And the children when grown up, may, as many in this land do, avail themselves of being, what is called, baptised in their infancy, and never seek after the alone saving baptism, (a) " which is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," whereof *he*, by his Holy Spirit, is the sole administrator throughout all ages.

Secondly, How can the negroes conceive, that by eating a bit of bread, and sipping a little wine, they really participate spiritually of the body and blood of Christ ? The utmost that can be inferred from the words of Christ to his disciples (as recited in Luke xxii. 19 & 20. at the passover, when he blessed and brake the bread, and handed it as he did the cup to them, as the sign of his body and blood being offered up for them,) is, that " they did it in remembrance

I hope this author, who appears to be a pious enlightened man, does not believe that their flight would have been less rapid from their cots (a sort of cradle now pretty much in use) than from the foot ; but why did he pen what may render it suspected ?

(a) 1 Peter iii. 21.

of

of him, and thereby shewed forth his death, till he came." And although to a truly religious person who conscientiously observes this ceremony, merely as a remembrance of him, there may a degree of solemnity attend, under the consideration of his sufferings, and the merciful end of his coming; I will venture to assert, that his body and blood is not spiritually conveyed by the administering material bread and wine; nor does the communion of the saints stand in any degree therein; nor is it necessary thereby to revive the remembrance of Christ in those souls who have experienced his second coming unto their salvation from sin; for these sanctify him in their hearts, and feed upon him, the living eternal word of God, with whom they have sweet communion; and many of them see clearly the non-necessity of continuing this (as the Church of England styles it) * "outward sign of an inward and spiritual grace:" for, participating of the *substance*, the shadow of it ceases to be of use. And may not those who are † *not of the faithful*, and yet are exercised in that which is acknowledged to be but the shadow, abide therein, supposing it to be a means of conveying the body and blood of Christ to their souls? Without breach of charity this may be concluded to be the case of many, who partake of the outward bread and wine; for they

* See Church of England Catechism.

† I believe but few who observe this ceremony suppose themselves to be so unfaithful as not to be benefited thereby.

are too unclean to approach Christ's holy table, or to taste of his supper, spiritually.

Thirdly, In regard to the outward mode of worship, some of the principal leaders among the Methodists direct their followers to attend that of the Church of England; and what can the negroes think, when they see the minister put on a white robe to read prayers in, and a * black one to preach in? Again, how are they edified by the minister's going from the pulpit or desk, to repeat a part of the sermon before the communion table; and, at particular times, the people turning and praying towards the east? What is meant by these changes of garments and attitudes in prayer, by those who observe them, I know not; but suspect both to be retained from the heathens; as the priests of Baal were wont to be clothed in black, and the Romans prayed towards the east; probably because there the sun arose; as other pagans (particularly the Persians) worshipped towards the rising sun. If any of the negroes in Africa pay adoration to that luminary, may not those in our West India settlements, &c. who see

* William Fulk, that English champion of the protestants in the time of Queen Elizabeth, writes, "The Priests of Baal had the name of Chemarims for their black garments, which they did wear superstitiously." See Zeph. i. 4, which Anthony Purver, in his translation of the Old Testament, makes, "Black ones." The critics have allowed Purver to be a literal, though in some instances an inelegant translator: but I think, whoever reads him with attention, will admit, that in many parts the sense of scripture is conveyed much more clearly than in the common translation.

this

this custom continued in the church of England liturgy, be pleased ; and suppose that God, in a particular manner, is present in that quarter of the heavens ? Whereas the Heaven of heavens cannot contain him ; yet his throne is established in a truly humbled heart, which is also his temple and altar, cleansed and consecrated by the Holy Spirit to his service. Oh ! the humbling depth of his worship ! did professing Christians comprehend it, they would see how inconsistent the frequent varied postures, sounds, and repetitions of words, wherein many of them are exercised, are therewith : which, instead of adding to the solemnity of public worship, tend, by a continual round of bodily exercises, to prevent the spirit's centering in the worship of God, in his " temple of the heart," whereinto when he is entered, (a) " Let all the earth keep silence before him !"

I might enlarge, but hope I have said enough to exculpate Friends from just censure, for not contributing to the expences of the before-mentioned missions ; but am inclined here to add, that some enlightened minds of both clergy and laity of the Church of England have lamented, that such observances should remain therein, as tend to shade the lustre of its fundamental principle, and prevent many from uniting with them in the outward mode of worship.

(a) Habakkuk ii. 20. I would be understood here, to mean all the imaginations and contrivances of the earthly or carnal mind and will, which is too frequently engaged in what has but the name of worship.

Should

Should the constraining power of gospel-love, engage ministers among Friends to visit the negroes, and endeavour to turn them from darkness to light, and from (a) the power of Satan unto God, that they may, through Christ, receive remission of their sins, and an inheritance among those who are sanctified; the expences attending their labours would be cheerfully borne, either by themselves or their brethren and sisters; and they conceive this should be the case with the various religious societies which take part in this work.

And, inasmuch as all ministers who conscientiously labour among the negroes, may not see alike in some points, yet may all of them concur in labouring, that they may attain the necessary experience of faith in Christ, and regeneration through his Spirit; each of them should be careful not to invalidate the labours of others, nor strive to fix the negroes in observances which will not profit them: ever bearing in mind the following apostolic injunctions, as necessary to be observed by every gospel minister, viz. (b) “ Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the judge standeth before the door;” and (c) “above all things put on charity:” which, as it is pure love to God and men, will engage to labour simply for the settlement of these poor ignorant people in what is really profitable, and necessary to be believed and practised.

(a) Acts xxvi. 18.

(b) James v. 9.

(c) Collos. iii. 14.

That

That the universal love of God, manifested in and through his Son Christ Jesus, the alone Mediator and Advocate with him, the Father, for the whole bulk of mankind, may be preached in the demonstration and power of the Divine Spirit to the poor negroes, and be by them believed and received, in the love of the unmixed gospel of peace and salvation, is the desire of

CATHARINE PHILLIPS.

Redruth, 12th of 6th Month, 1792.

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